

Sustainable Natural Resources Funding for Iowa

Tuesday, July 15, 2008 -- Committee Meeting Summary
Wallace Building 5th Floor Conference Room – Des Moines, IA
Wallace Bldg, 502 East 9th Street, 5th Floor, Des Moines, IA 50319

Committee members:

Mark	Ackelson	Present	Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
Jane	Clark	Present	Sierra Club
Dan	Cohen	Absent	IACCB
Dick	Dearden	Absent	IA Senate-D
Barbara	Finch	Present	Iowa Farm Bureau
Jim	Gillespie	Absent	Secretary of Agriculture
Tom	Holm	Present	Izaak Walton League of Iowa
Jon	Kruse	Present	Ducks Unlimited
Richard	Leopold	Present	IA Dept of Natural Resources, Chair
Mary	Lundby	Absent	Iowa Senate - R
Sean	McMahon	Present	The Nature Conservancy
Jerry	Peckumn	Absent	Iowa Rivers Revival
Henry	Rayhons	Absent	Iowa House of Representatives-R
Leo	Rieken	Present	Land Improvement Contractors Assoc.
Marian	Riggs-Gelb	Present	Iowa Environmental Council
Deb	Ryun	Present	Conservation Districts of Iowa
Marvin	Shirley	Present	Farmers Union
Dave	Van Waus	Absent	Pheasants Forever
John	Whitaker	Absent	IA House of Representatives-D
Julie	Vyskocil	Absent	Iowa Renewable Fuels Association

The Chair provided opening remarks and asked for introductions and any comments from those attending.

Barb Finch reported she has been working with Joe Johnson, Farm Bureau, on presenting SF information to the voting delegates for consideration as Farm Bureau policy this year. The process is detailed (questionnaires, information to the delegates, local delegates are elected, policy items may be moved forward to gain consideration for the agenda). Barb indicated education needs to be done to help with the understanding of SF. Barb and Joe have gained the opportunity to present at the FB annual meeting for 08/14/08. This meeting of voting delegates will be one of two agenda items which will be discussed and voted on by these delegates. Barb requested assistance with a PowerPoint presentation. Barb reported she worked to get the issues out to local meetings last year and that helped with this year's efforts. She also reported that several of Iowa's Missouri border counties understand the concept of a percentage sales tax dedicated to natural resource funding. However, there are some concerns about the understanding of what sustainable funding is and how we got there.

The role of the SFC was discussed as well as the value of the researched and vetted information for the legislative report. It was reiterated the expansion and clarification of the seven funding vehicles and the determined funding mechanism allocation will be a valuable resource. The committee agreed on the following percentage allocations:

20% Agriculture and Land Stewardship

07% Lake Restoration
13% LCPP (Local Conservation Partnership Program
23% Natural Resources Conservation and Protection
13% REAP
10% Trails
14% Watershed Protection

It was also discussed that the funding vehicles must be coordinated to the focus areas of water quality, economic development, and agriculture. The discussion resulted in emphatic agreement that the SFC will remain committed to the original vision as outlined in their reports over their last two years of investigation and research.

The committee discussed the points agreed upon for the SFC role and that the messages and work must do the following:

1. Fulfill the language of the legislation.
2. The SFC will resist changes to the identified seven funding vehicles; the process has been evaluated and vetted in depth for two years.
3. The SFC will maintain consensus of the funding allocation to the identified seven funding vehicles.
4. The SF Coalition will be the group talking to citizens; the SFC is the committee tasked with presenting their assignments to the legislators.

The funding vehicles were examined as to which may need more details presented in how the dollars would be utilized within the funding vehicle:

- REAP: Details and distribution in place already
- LCPP: The SFC will ask Dan Cohen to work on the details of this funding vehicle.
- Trails: The SFC will explore the role of DOT and CCB. Mark Ackelson will follow up with securing a DOT presentation for the next SFC meeting.
- Natural Resource Conservation Practices (fka DNR): The DNR will make determinations as to programs designated for funding
- Lake Restoration: Details and distribution in place already
- Agriculture and Land Stewardship (fka IDALS): IDALS to discuss how additional funding will be allocated.
- Watershed Protection: The SFC will explore further details on how watersheds are improved by different agencies and how the overall ~60% of SF revenue would enhance water quality. DNR and IDALS can provide information.

In closing, Barb stressed, as the SFC moves forward with messaging, it should not be forgotten that maintenance factors need to be considered in how we allocate or represent the need for the funding. Also, the unfortunate aftermath of this year's flooding brought to light the need to put focus on management methods of our natural resources which could provide improvement or reduction in the frequency, duration, or impact of flooding and flood related issues.

The next meeting is scheduled for:

Tuesday, 09/02/08, 10am, in the Wallace Building, Des Moines, IA.

Upcoming SFC Meeting Dates:

10/21/08	8a-5p (exact time tbd)	Wallace Building - DSM
11/19/08	8a-5p (exact time tbd)	Wallace Building - DSM
12/17/08	8a-5p (exact time tbd)	Wallace Building - DSM